When the Indians Played Football

"JUST like a band of Indians" is a frequent description of a group of boys playing at football, and while the fact is not generally realized, a group of football players should act like Indians, for the redskins were playing the game long before Columbus arrived in the New World.

According to old colonial writers football among the Indians was an elaborate game, and one for which many preparations were made. Generally the braves of one tribe chose sides, though on occasions rival tribes played.

The game was always played over a flat country, and the goals were about a mile apart. The ball was made of leather, and filled with moss.

At games between tribes the braves would come to the field in full fighting regalia, daubed with paint, and wearing their best feathers. When the time for the game approached all this adornment was laid aside, and the Indians were ready for the first move of the ball. The games were always friendly, and the players frequently shook hands and rubbed noses to show that they were enjoying the sport.

The ball would be kicked into the air, and the game was on—and played much as modern football. One old writer described the game, saying, "The men mount the ball in the air with their naked feet, and it is oft-times swayed by the multitude."

The game was not played quickly as our football games of today. It frequently took three days to make a goal, and when at sundown the game had not been decided the place where the ball had fallen was marked, and at that point the game would be resumed the next day. They played a fair, clean game, and made no attempts at fouls.

William Wood, an old writer, says of the Indians' game: "It is most delightful to see them play, when men may view their swift footmanship, their curious toeing of the ball, their wrestling." Mr. Wood goes on to say that the Indians had little cunning in their game, however, and that he believed one white man could play as well as ten Indians.

It was only natural, seeing the Indians at the game, that the white men should attempt to play it. It became a very popular game for half holidays, the brief times when the colonists were able to leave their work and indulge in out-of-door sports. The ball was generally an inflated bladder, and more often than not there was no leather covering.

By Revolutionary times there were numerous villages along the Atlantic Coast from Maine to Georgia. Each of these had its village green given over to recreation, and one of the most popular games for the bracing fall days was football. At first the game was a simple scrimmage, but afterward teams were formed, and simple rules were laid down. The goals were as we have them, and there was a rule that the ball could not be carried nor batted, but only propelled by the feet. The accidental kicking of the ball outside the set boundaries made it necessary to adopt a rule to cover that emergency, and they carried it back into the field at the place where it rolled out as do our players of today. There were, of course, any number of local rules made necessary by each field such as playing round trees that stood on the green, the jumping of a brook, and rules made to fit certain players.

Kearney—One of Twenty Veterans

IT WAS on the twelfth day of November, 1861, that President Lincoln issued an order for the formation of the West Gulf Squadron, later popularly known as "Farragut's Fleet." Its field of duty extended along the coasts of Mexico and Yucatan, from St. Andrews Bay on the west coast of Florida to the mouth of the Rio Grande, and on the Mississippi River from the Gulf of Mexico to Vicksburg. During the three years of its existence the fleet included one hundred and twenty-eight vessels, manned by more than fifteen thousand officers and men. It was in twenty-nine engagements, two of which, the battles of New Orleans and Mobile Bay, are classed among the sixteen great naval battles of the world.

HENRY J. KEARNEY

At the time of the formation of the fleet, Henry J. Kearney was twelve years old and lived with his mother in New York City. In the flood of patriotism that swept the country at that time, young Kearney was carried off his feet in his desire to see service. Owing to the fact that his mother, because of his extreme youth, disapproved of his entering the service, he ran away to enlist in the navy, and was assigned to the sloop "Portsmouth" as a powder boy.

"In those days," said Mr. Kearney, when seen at his office in the Woolworth Building, "we did not have the mechanical apparatus for serving the guns with which every modern ship is equipped, and which makes that operation an extremely simple one. I had to carry the powder from the powder division to the gun, and hand it to the loader. The powder was in a bag made of bunting, similar to the cloth of which flags are made, which was also in a leather bag. It was dangerous work, but we did not think of that."

At the battle of New Orleans the "Portsmouth" was towed by the "J. P. Jackson" as far as Fort Jackson, where a masked battery opened fire. The "Portsmouth" could not return the fire and the "Jackson" cut the towline, the "Portsmouth" dropped back to Pilot-town, and was consequently out of the fight.

After the battle of New Orleans, Kearney was detailed to naval headquarters and for about a year carried dispatches from there to army headquarters and to the fleet.

Complying with a request to relate some incident in which he had a close call, Mr. Kearney told the following story:

"It was at the blockade of Mobile Bay, just before the battle occurred. I had been sent with important dispatches to Admiral Farragut who was on the flagship, the 'Hartford.' We went on the dispatch boat 'James Battle.' On the boat with me were Commodore Palmer, General Gordon Granger, General Canby and General Sickles, with their respective staffs. We went down through Lake Pontchartrain and the Rigolettes. In the morning, at about four o'clock, as I was lying on deck, Commodore Palmer passed by several times and seemed nervous. We struck a sand bar and the Commodore went to the pilot house and asked the captain how it happened. He replied that the bar was uncharted. In the meantime off our port bow was a black smudge of smoke. The boat from which it came would probably head us off, as we were sailing on two sides of a triangle.

"We backed off the sand bar, but a few minutes later struck another bar, and were fast. Commodore Palmer went to the pilot house, drew his revolver, and told the captain if we struck another bar he would blow his brains out. It was subsequently learned that the captain was a friend of the Confederacy, and had planned to deliver his passengers, one commodore, three major generals and their staffs, and the important dispatches which I carried, to a Confederate ship."

"But you got to the 'Hartford' all right?"

"Yes," continued Mr. Kearney. "The United States ship 'Metacomet' came up and the smoke on the port bow gradually grew less. The Admiral's barge from the 'Hartford' came alongside and we all got into it with the exception of General Sickles. When we got to the 'Hartford' I delivered the dispatches to Admiral Farragut, and then had dinner. In the afternoon, when the barge was going back to the dispatch boat, I wanted to remain on the 'Hartford,' and hid. After my name had been called several times, however, I decided I had better come out, which I did, and reluctantly returned to New Orleans."

Some time after this incident, however, Kearney was detailed to the 'Hartford' as a messenger boy, on which boat he served until after the battle of Mobile Bay, and was with Admiral Farragut when he gave that famous order on the 5th of August, 1864: "Damn the torpedoes! Four bells ahead, Drayton."

Mr. Kearney believes with Admiral Farragut that the battle of Mobile Bay was his greatest victory. The government, however, considers that of New Orleans the most important, as it split the Confederacy in twain, deprived it of its largest maritime city, and gave the North control over the mouth of the longest North American waterway.

After serving in the navy for eight years, Mr. Kearney entered business life for a short time, and then went to Washington where, for one session of Congress, he served on the Capitol Police. It was while in Washington that he met A. L. Barber, who offered him a position with his asphalt interests, with whom he has been identified ever since, spending twelve years in Trinidad and Venezuela.

In the year 1878 the officers and men who had served with Admiral Farragut during the late war formed an organization known as "The Associated Veterans of Farragut's Fleet" with Admiral, then Commodore, Dewey as honorary president. At that time they numbered about fifteen thousand men, and posts were established throughout the country.

In 1907, Henry J. Kearney was elected Commander of the Associated Veterans of Farragut's Fleet, which office he still holds.

But the years have depleted the ranks of those brave men who rode with Farragut over the torpedoes in Mobile Bay. Gradually their numbers have grown fewer, until today, the original fifteen thousand has dwindled to but twenty men, of whom eight are in different parts of the country and the world.

Twelve of the twenty are in New York. On the anniversary of the Battle of Mobile Bay, Commander Kearney and his comrades meet in Madison Square, and lay a wreath upon the monument of Admiral Farragut, in solemn reverence to the memory of the man with whom they fought on that August day in 1864.

How Londoners Lunch in Simpson's Coffee-House

AMONG the thousands of Americans who are expected to visit the English port of Plymouth during the "Mayflower" centenary celebrations, there probably will be many who will make use of the occasion to see London. There, as here, they will find it a question not so easy to solve, where to get a good lunch for not too much money.

Before the war there were several establishments in the English metropolis where half a dozen pennies would go far to satisfy hungry stomachs. There was, for instance, the "Swedish restaurant" in Oxford street, where, after paying a fee of sixpence, one was admitted to a lunch counter loaded with delicious sandwiches of every description. There were several of that kind of "eating houses" in the city, but the government has caused them to be closed on account of the scarcity of food.

The stranger, especially the American tourist, will be attracted by the genuine old London "joints" like "The Old Cheshire Cheese" in Fleet street, the coffee-house frequented by Dr. Johnson, where everything is left exactly as it was in the good old doctor's time. Here, however, prices are pretty steep, and the dishes, though well prepared, are rather "stodgy" on account of their old Englishness.

But if one wants a good lunch at reasonable price, at the same time making the acquaintance of an ancient and rather odd institution, one has to direct his steps toward Cheapside. There, near to number 76, in Bird-in-Hand Court, stands Simpson's Coffee-House. The right time to arrive there is one o'clock sharp. The stranger who enters the coffee-house at that hour and climbs the stairs to the second floor will find everything in readiness for the "fish ordinary."

And here is what he sees. At a horseshoe-shaped table in a low ceilinged room sit about fifty persons, some of them ladies. On the walls hang appropriate drawings, done, with more or less talent, by the guests themselves. At the head of the table are placed three fauteuils. At the middle one sits the president; on each side of him a vice president. The chairman is a tall, lean old gentleman, who has the appearance of an old-fashioned Scotch dominie, long gray hair, a large sharp-boned nose, ruddy cheeks and long side-whiskers. He rises from his ornamentally carved seat.

Bang! the mallet hits the table. "Ladies and gentlemen, we shall now ask a blessing: For all we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful."

The first course is a plate of delicious oxtail soup. While the guests are partaking of this broth, the waiter places a giant halibut before the president, who proceeds to divide the same, assisted by the vice presidents. Then come in the order named, a dish of hake, very well prepared; sardines in mustard, with slices of brown bread; boiled beef with onions and potatoes, cake, and finally a generous portion of nice cheese with celery and water cress, and coffee *ad libitum*. All that for 85 cents!

Bang! . . . . The president rises and says, "Gentlemen, you may now smoke," and with a disdainful mien, "The ladies—also; if they *must!*"

After a little while: Bang! "Ladies and gentlemen, we shall now say grace: For all we have received may the Lord make us truly thankful." And then comes the great event.

Bang! "According to our ancient and venerable custom we will now assert the measurements and weight of the cheese here before us"—pointing to a cheese of giant proportions. First the height. Slips are distributed, on which each guest writes his estimate. When all slips are in, the president applies the measure and announces the correct cipher. Then follows the guessing of the amount of inches in circumference, the president again deciding by applying a tape measure. And then the weight, for the ascertaining of which a scale is used. If any one of the guests has guessed all the three ciphers correctly—which happens once in a while—the whole party is treated on champagne and cigars.

A queer proceeding, you say. Yes, but not so queer when one knows that the same performance has been gone through daily since the year 1728. Sixteen years ago the original inn burned down, which calamity in no way halted the daily proceeding. On the yet smoking ruins the table was laid, and dinner partaken of by a dozen guests, presided over by the same dignified gentleman, who, after the eating and the smoking, in the same solemn manner, said grace, "according to our ancient and venerable custom."